

The Baptist Record

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How to witness to "publishers" — Jehovah's Witnesses

*This article is second in a series on interfaith witnessing, taken from *Interfaith Witnessing: A Guide for Southern Baptists*, by Glenn Igleheart. For specific help or training, call the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at (601) 968-3800.*

Although three of every four Jehovah's Witnesses live outside the United States today, this movement began more than a hundred years ago in a suburb of Pittsburgh, Penn. Its founder was Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), whose adventist views attracted people to the organization known as Zion's Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (organized in 1884). Russell taught that Jesus would return in 1914, and that the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 14:1 and 3 were the Witnesses.

The second leader was Judge Joseph F. Rutherford (1868-1942), who changed Russell's democratic local organization into a theocratic one, declaring that Jesus had returned in 1914, only invisibly.

The headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses is in Brooklyn, N.Y. This is the central publishing center and nerve center of the movement which has now become an international society. In 1983 there were 2,653,000 Witnesses worldwide, with 634,170 in the United States.

Administration

The locus of authority for Jehovah's Witnesses is their headquarters in Brooklyn. Although individual Witnesses will attest to the Bible as their primary source

of authority, the real sources to which they look are the words and materials that come out of Brooklyn. All materials produced there are anonymous and doctrinally authoritative. The same lesson from *The Watchtower* magazine is studied each week in Kingdom Halls. All those lessons are written in Brooklyn or have been checked by persons in the governing body of the movement. In contrast, Southern Baptist Bible study materials, while written within certain doctrinal boundaries, carry names of their authors, and do not have the force of official SBC statements.

(Jehovah's Witnesses) members are called publishers, reflecting their avowed purpose of publishing the word about Jehovah God's intent for the world. They meet in Kingdom Halls. Their organization is not led by ordained ministers but by lay overseers.

Practices and Doctrines

Jehovah's Witnesses are works-oriented people. They are active in their Kingdom Halls. Five times a week they have meetings there which are open to everyone. Two of those meetings are for training in how to visit in homes, and in how to give short presentations to prospects.

Jehovah's Witnesses appeal to those who feel marginalized in a society: those on the edge of society because of their race, sex, color, or social or economic standing. The movement itself is interracial and intercultural. One gains status in being a Witness, a member of an elect group which will not suffer in the end of the age, Armageddon.

Beliefs

Their beliefs are a string of negatives:

— There is no trinity in the godhead. There is only one God, and his name is Jehovah. In this regard they are unitarians.

— There is no divinity in the earthly Jesus. He was an angel in the Old Testament (Michael), was born a normal human being, became Christ at his baptism, died by crucifixion on a stake (not a cross), and after his spiritual resurrection became Michael the Archangel again.

— There is no physical resurrection of Christ. His resurrection was spiritual only. He was given immortality and divinity as a reward for his faithfulness in life. There is no future second coming of Jesus. He already came back, though invisibly, in 1914. He will return next for Armageddon, a battle between him and his angels against Satan and his satanic forces, of which we are seen as a part.

— There is no full atonement at the cross.

— There is no hell for those who reject Jehovah. After the judgment they will simply be annihilated.

— There is no other church besides the Watch Tower Society.

— Other practices include no saluting of national flags (seen as placing allegiance to a nation as higher than their allegiance to Jehovah), no blood transfusions (seen as the "drinking of blood" as prohibited in verses like Deut. 12:16), and no observance of Christmas and Easter (since these were originally pagan feasts which the church adopted and infused

with Christian meaning).

Witnessing to the Witnesses

— Be friendly, whether you are visiting them or they are visiting you.

— Be firm in the use of time and in the agenda you discuss. Be firm also in pressing for the authority of the Bible.

— Be challenging. Tell them you are also a student of the Bible. Do not let the Jehovah's Witnesses imply that only they study the Bible and know its truths.

— Be personal. Bear your own testimony at the same time you ask for theirs.

— Be ready to minister to their needs in times of crisis. Be ready to answer their questions when the Witness authorities cannot.

— Be persistent. Every Jehovah's Witness needs a Baptist or other Christian friend.

— Also witness to those who are not Jehovah's Witnesses but who may be confused. Help nonbelieving persons... understand the difference between biblical Christianity and Jehovah's Witnesses.



Lad Crusader Day

Royal Ambassadors from Second Church, Greenville, (pictured) accumulated the most points during activities at the April 16 Lad Crusader Day at Central Hills Retreat in Kosciusko. The Greenville group, led by James Kerr (left) and Mack Mooney (right), was among 476 boys and leaders, representing 39 churches, who attended the event. Beulah Church, Myrtle, took the distinction of "largest group" with 34 members present. Along with activities, the boys and leaders heard mission reports from Vic Bowman, former missionary to Chile, and Tom Thurman, missionary to Bangladesh. The Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board sponsored the event.

Churches nix lottery money

The list continues to grow for church-sponsored relief and development agencies in Canada refusing to accept government funding that includes lottery revenues. The province of Alberta in western Canada recently announced that the source of public money to help finance church-related projects would be switched from regular tax revenues to lottery proceeds. That brought swift action from groups that had previously benefitted from the funding. Among those refusing to take the tainted money were World Vision Canada, World Relief Canada, Anglican Church of Canada, Compassion Canada, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Presbyterian Church in Canada, United Church in Canada, and Mennonite Central Committee. Stan Fisher, executive director of the government agency that doles out lottery revenues, said the funding switch was the result of cost-cutting and reorganization in the provincial government. Fisher also predicted that refusal to accept the money will not cause the government to reconsider its actions.

City's cross to return

Voters in Wauwatosa, Wis., a community on the outskirts of Milwaukee, voted by a margin of nearly three-to-one to return the Christian cross to the city's official seal. The cross was removed in 1992 when atheist leader Rob Sherman accused the city of violating the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. However, balloting on April 5 by the people of Wauwatosa ran 9,100 in favor to 3,300 opposed to returning the symbol of Christ's crucifixion to the city's seal. Mayor Maricette Walsh said the city council had hoped to avoid the expense of threatened litigation over the cross, but Wauwatosa's citizens also sent a clear message on that subject. By a separate vote of 7,100 to 5,100, they approved paying any legal expenses arising from their ballot approval of the cross. A similar complaint in Mississippi several years ago resulted in the cessation of a lighted Christmas cross on the state's Sillers Office Building in downtown Jackson. The cross now appears on a private building.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

The old Baptist Book Store on the corner of Amite and President Streets in downtown Jackson will soon close its doors and move into space vacated by a furniture distribution warehouse at Westland Plaza in south Jackson.

20 years ago

Mississippians driving to Portland, Ore., for the Baptist Youth World Conference are assured that the gasoline shortage plaguing the nation is easing in the Portland area, where a few gas stations are even open on weekends.

50 years ago

The eggs which were sent in abundance to the Baptist Orphanage around Easter time as part of an effort to support that worthy institution were greatly appreciated. Superintendent W.G. Mize says they can always use eggs.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Our soul is showing

Love, by some definitions, is a soft, mushy feeling you have when someone pleases you. To others love is a tough cord that binds us together even when we are not pleasing. Tough love is the gripping need of the hour. A prison chaplain tells of convicts trying to get him to smuggle things in or out or to overlook infractions of rules. "No, I love you too much to do that," he would reply. "Love rides the wings of discipline and I love you too much to encourage the undisciplined life."

Could it be that love is more important than orthodoxy? Without love, your preaching is naught but noise. Without love, your prophecy, your knowledge, and your faith profit little. Without love, your offerings, your mission giving, your Cooperative Program records — all is as nothing.

Note the love possessed by the Good Samaritan. He helped a stranger with no thought of repayment. Orthodoxy walked by on the other side of the wounded man. Unselfish love could be the only greatness heaven recognizes. It's the recognized coin in God's realm and the language spoken in glory.

Henry Drummond called it the "greatest thing in the world." He

once issued a challenge for people to read 1 Corinthians 13 every week for three months.

The four chaplains on the torpedoed troopship "Dorchester" gave their life jackets to others. Their sacrifice showed the depth of concern and love for those in need.

Love is the "cure-all" for a generation sick with sin. Love is the foundation of all that is worthwhile. Love is as patient as Jacob laboring for years for his beloved Rachel. It's the mark of recognition for a disciple of Jesus.

Add to love a touch of compassion. It was said of Dwight Moody that "he had a right to preach since he could not talk about sinners without tears in his eyes." How often we quote, "You are saved by grace through faith... not of works lest any man should boast."

Verse 10 reads, "We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:9-10). Tackle something tough for a change; try "Be ye kind... forgiving one another... be ye therefore followers of God... and walk in love." (Eph. 4:32, 5:1).

We need to speak of "forgiveness" in the Southern Baptist Convention. Grudges of long standing have built walls of separation and isolation. Forgiveness

is such a God-like quality; how dare we neglect it.

Perhaps it was the thought of such love and forgiveness which caused a pagan to say, "I always knew there must be a God like Jesus."

Bitter recriminations have poisoned the air in the SBC. One pastor observed, "It's amazing, we call each other names we would not call rank pagans, Roman Catholics, or sects." It reminds us of the words of Charles Wesley in the Armenian-Calvinistic debate: "Alas, they murdered love with truth."

In "Light," F. W. Bourdillon penned the words:

"The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world
dies
With the dying sun.
The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life
dies
When love is done."

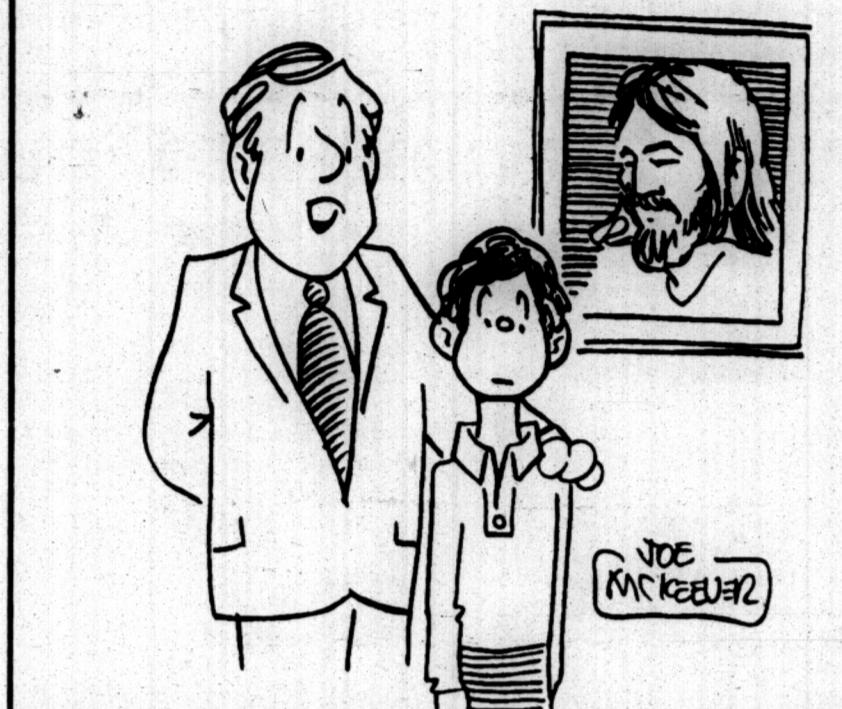
The thousand eyes of strife, jealousy, envy, or contention will die out where love shines like the sun, be it in the workplace, the home, or the church and convention. What have we to lose?



Guy Henderson

Thursday, May 12, 1994

"YES, HE IS ALWAYS
WATCHING YOU — BUT
IT'S BECAUSE HE'S TRYING
TO CATCH YOU DOING
GOOD!"



THE FRAGMENTS

You parents are so funny

It's hard for me to believe it, but I actually read **What Pre-teens Want Their Parents to Know** by 11-year-old Ryan Holladay and friends. Come on, Ryan, write one for grandparents. I hate it when a kid's first book is a best seller.

"You parents are funny" is the opening line... and then the wisdom of 9-, 10-, and 11-year-olds spews forth with accolades and condemnations: "Don't always be the teacher and don't show too much affection in public," "Say 'yes' more often than 'no,'" and "Set limits on the amount of television I watch."

"Don't take it personally when I act weird... sometimes I feel weird. Hang out with me sometimes. Please stop showing pictures of me to everyone you meet. This is very embarrassing. Keep

praying for me. It makes me feel secure. Ask forgiveness of me sometimes. Listening is one of the best ways to show me you love me.

"I enjoy seeing my parents hug. Never put me down, especially in front of my friends. Let me express myself through my hair and clothes. Set clear, consistent boundaries. Never, never call me by a pet name in public. Take me to work with you and watch my favorite TV shows with me. Teach me right and wrong. I'm no longer the little child you think of me as, but I'm also not as grown up as I like to pretend."

It is pocket-book size, published by McCracken Press. They are not apt to make a movie of it, so plan to read it. I'm sure that my four kids wish it had been in print years ago. — GH

"We may not be far from the day in which 'crisis dying centers' will be as necessary as crisis pregnancy centers," he said. "Dying persons will need somewhere to spend their last days without the fear that their deaths will be hastened. Church-operated hospices should flourish under that scenario."

In the meantime, Christians can minister in this area, Mitchell said.

"Pain can be treated effectively

with medications in nearly every case," Mitchell said. "Suffering is emotional and spiritual pain. Christians can help relieve suffering by helping dying patients feel loved and cared for. We can pray with them, spend time with them, and help their care-givers. When that happens, in most cases, the desire for assisted death disappears."

Strude is director, media & news information, Washington office, CLC.

Guest opinion...

CLC says Kevorkian acquittal another blow to sanctity of life

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP) — Jack Kevorkian's acquittal on an assisted-suicide charge provides "another example of the horrendous assault on the sanctity of human life," a Southern Baptist ethicist said.

A jury cleared Kevorkian May 2 of violating Michigan's assisted suicide law. Although Kevorkian placed a mask over the face of a gravely ill 30-year-old man and hooked it to a tank of poisonous carbon monoxide gas, the jury in Detroit decided his purpose was to alleviate suffering rather than cause death, according to news reports. The Michigan law allows an exception for physicians seeking to ease pain.

The exception should not have been a loophole for Kevorkian's benefit, said Ben Mitchell, director of biomedical and life issues for the Christian Life Commission.

"The intent of the Michigan law was to permit physicians to treat

pain adequately, not to assist in the patient's death," Mitchell said. "Carbon monoxide gas is not an analgesic. It does not relieve suffering; it ends the life of the patient. No physician administers carbon monoxide to treat pain. The purpose of Kevorkian's act was to kill the patient."

"What Kevorkian did to Thomas Hyde was just as much accessory to suicide as if he had handed him a loaded revolver."

Hyde suffered from a degenerative nerve disorder commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, named after the famous New York Yankees first baseman who died of the ailment in 1941.

It was the first jury decision under the Michigan law, although Kevorkian, a retired pathologist, has assisted in or attended 20 suicides since 1990. According to news reports, some jurors said afterward the verdict was an emotional as much as a legal one. The

jury also said the uncertainty of what county in which the suicide took place was a factor, it was reported.

Such a rationale is alarming, Mitchell said.

"They admitted that their verdict was not the result of an honest assessment of guilt or innocence in the light of the law, but a judgment based on misdirected sentimentality," he said. "The question is not whether persons can take their own lives in suicide, but whether or not our society is going to allow the Jack Kevorkians of this world to be accessories to self-murder."

The implications of the decision may be far-reaching, Mitchell said.

"Will we return to a compassionate society of men and women who love their neighbors, or will we continue to slide into the abyss of barbarism?" he asked. "The indications are that we are moving toward the latter at break-neck speed."

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Associate Editor William H. Perkins Jr.
Advertising/News writer Teresa Dickens
Editorial Associate Florence Larrimore
Circulation Manager Renee Walley
Bookkeeper Betty Anne Bailey
Layout/News writer Shannon T. Simpson
Editor Emeritus Don McGregor

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Baptists help refugees

Southern Baptist representative Charles Collins answers questions about the Bible posed by indigenous Indian residents of the Mexican state of Chiapas, scene of a guerrilla uprising in January that was put down by the Mexican military. Mexican Baptist and Southern Baptist volunteers continue to operate food kitchens for the refugees, feeding hundreds of people every day. In Las Margaritas where Collins is working, three new churches are planned and at least 14 refugees have accepted Christ as Savior. The effort is being greatly assisted by Bibles in the refugees' language, donated by the National Baptist Convention of Mexico. (BP photo by Lee Baggett)

Construction volunteers needed for Brotherhood/Japan partnership plan

MEMPHIS — The Brotherhood Commission is calling for volunteers with construction experience to serve on two major projects in Japan in a first-ever partnership with the Foreign Mission Board and its mission there.

The work will be done by teams consisting of six to 10 men and two women. Each excursion, which includes a tour of Tokyo, will last six weeks.

The first project begins June 1 and involves the construction of a three-story church. Teams will depart the U.S. on June 1, July 13, and Aug. 31. Young men are especially needed for the first two teams.

Plans for the second project call for the construction of eight buildings to house Japan Baptist Convention staff and their families. Again, teams will depart the U.S. for six-week stays, beginning on Aug. 3. Housing project teams will continue to arrive through April, 1995.

"This arrangement will allow the churches in Japan to get maximum benefit from what we have

to offer as volunteers," said Russell Griffin, Brotherhood Commission assistant vice president. "We will save the Japan Baptist Convention about 40% of what it would cost if they went to a local contractor for these two projects. I can't think of a better example of good stewardship."

Both projects will use standard U.S. materials and will have a "western" appearance. Volunteers will need only hand tools such as hammers, squares, pliers, tool belts, and the like. Power tools will be provided at the work site.

The cost of each six-week excursion is \$525, which includes airfare from most major U.S. airports.

"The price makes it a unique opportunity to spend six weeks in a foreign country, work there, and have a really positive impact with Japanese Christians on Japan," said Griffin.

For more information, prospective volunteers should contact the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104; telephone (901) 272-2461.

SBC CP down for month, up for year

NASHVILLE (BP) — Cooperative Program receipts for April were down 8.43% compared to April of last year but the year-to-date total still exceeds the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

Gifts for April 1994 totaled \$10,865,870 compared to April 1993 of \$11,866,373. For the seven months (October through April) of the SBC fiscal year, the totals were \$82,756,762, compared to the previous year of \$81,774,894, or a 1.20% increase for 1993-94.

The year-to-date totals also kept the SBC above the required figure for seven months of the Program Allocation Budget: \$2,119,833 over the budget need or 102.63% of the budget. The monthly requirement for the 1993-94 budget is \$11,519,561.

Designated gifts for the month of April 1994 also increased: \$10,015,320 compared to April 1993 of \$9,308,297 or a 7.60% increase. The year-to-date 1994 figure for designated gifts exceeded 1993 by \$646,683, or a .72% increase.

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Mississippians stay put —

Baptists forced to flee from expanding Yemeni civil war

By Marty Croll

SANA, Yemen (BP) — Southern Baptist representatives Charles and Linda Renew joined a stream of Americans fleeing Yemen May 7 after a Scud missile fired at the presidential palace sailed over their home and knocked plaster off the ceiling.

The Red Sea nation entered its fifth day of civil war May 9 as fighting moved away from Sanaa, the capital city, toward the southern port city of Aden.

Two other Southern Baptist families were due to leave May 9, not far in advance of their originally scheduled return to the United States.

Edna Lindholm and her two children and Rodney and Diana Armstrong and their five children were to leave by military flight.

Lindholm's husband, Al, is staying to pack for furlough, scheduled to begin in June. The Armstrongs, assigned as International Service Corps workers, were to complete their term of service May 18.

Forty-two Southern Baptist workers had decided as of May 9 to stay in the country for now. Thirty-six of them were inside the 22-acre Jibla Baptist Hospital compound, a Southern Baptist-owned facility near the city of Ibb — well removed from the fighting. They reported they felt safe.

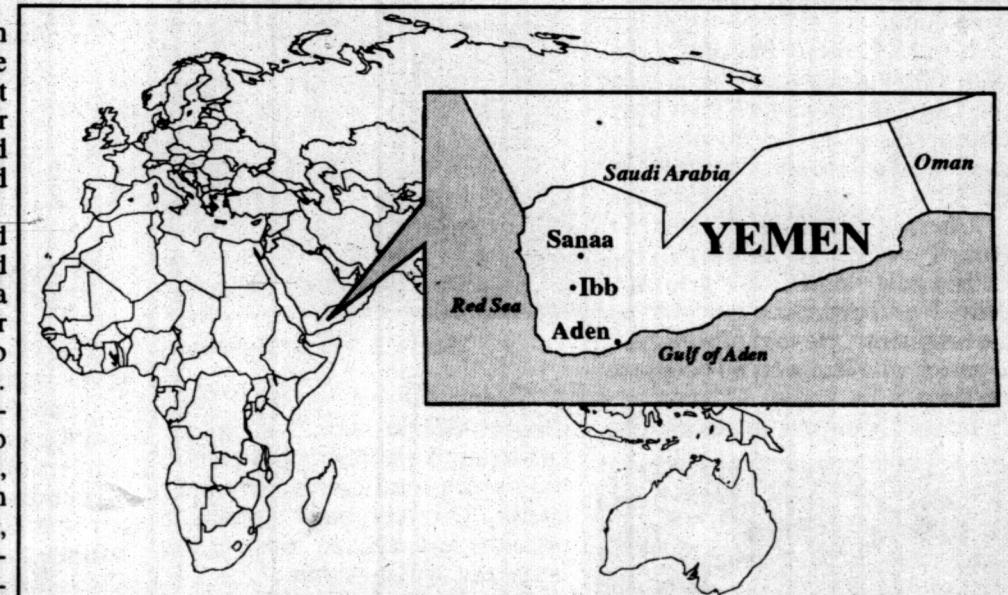
An armed guard was stationed outside the hospital compound. Because of the situation, Southern Baptist workers and other expatriates were not venturing outside. The hospital opened in 1967 under the direction of Southern Baptist workers James and June Young

and has gained prominence throughout the region since then.

Mississippi Baptists in Yemen include Robert L. Thomas, director of nursing at the Jibla Baptist Hospital, and his wife Beverly, a nurse at the hospital, according to information supplied by the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and the Foreign Mission Board (FMB). Both are from Senatobia.

Cadiz, Calif.; the Armstrongs, from DeSoto, Texas, and Irving, Texas; the Lewises, from Waterford, Conn., and Milo, Mich.; the Edwardses, from Calhoun, Ga., and Melbourne, Fla.; and the Whitsons, from Dallas.

Yemen became a new nation uniting separate northern and southern entities on May 22, 1990. Differences between the governments were never resolved and



The WMU listing also indicates that Mississippians William V. and Peggy S. Hart, normally assigned to Yemen, are presently on furlough in Oklahoma.

The three remaining Southern Baptist workers and their families in Sanaa — Roger and Marge Lewis, Stephen and Kandi Edwards, and Drew and Martha Whitsont — reported the battle had moved away from the capital city, although they were still hearing bombs at a distance.

The Renews are from Blackville, S.C., and Barnwell, S.C., respectively; the Lindholms, from San Luis Obispo, Calif., and

prevented integration of the armed forces. Sporadic clashes broke into all-out war May 5 when southern bombers flew sorties against Sanaa, reportedly damaging the presidential palace.

By May 9 most of the fighting had moved toward Aden, where northern forces were claiming imminent victory. Analysts quoted in news reports, however, said southern forces were strong enough to hold Aden for quite some time.

Croll writes for the Foreign Mission Board. William H. Perkins Jr. also contributed to this story.

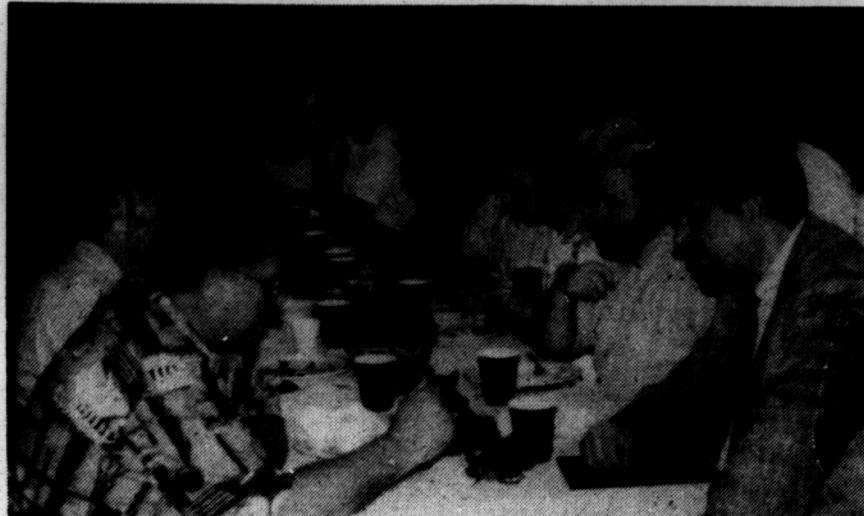
State CP hits April target, exceeds '93

Mississippi Baptists gave \$1,784,963 in April through the Cooperative Program, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which distributes the funds.

The April amount is \$97,810 more than that given in April of 1993. The January-April total for 1994 of \$7,518,106 is \$223,041 (or 3.06%) more than that given in the first four months of 1993.

Cooperative Program giving so far this year is right on target. Mississippi Baptists each year at the Mississippi Baptist Convention estimate the amount they will be giving for the next year. The budget passed at the November 1993 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention is \$22,452,000. This year's giving is \$34,106 over the pro rata amount of \$7,484,000. The pro rata amount is figured by taking the total budget, dividing by 12 (months) and multiplying by the number of months elapsed.

Gifts to the Cooperative Program go to Mississippi, national, and worldwide missions and education causes.



Scott Association hosts World Missions Conf.

Scott Association, Forest, held a World Missions Conference, April 30-May 7. There were 17 churches and 13 missionaries involved in the eight-day conference. A "kick-off" rally was held on Saturday evening and there was a luncheon each day (above photo). The luncheon enabled the missionaries to hear each other explain the work they were doing.

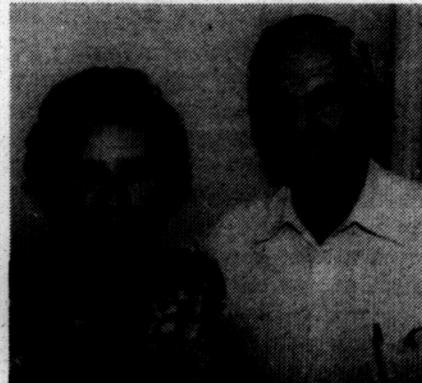
Ken McLemore, pastor at Lake, said, "They focus attention on what the Lord is about and I've been impressed with the information made available to our church workers."

Charles Tyson, Home Mission Board worker in Yuma, Ariz., called the WMC a "gourmet delight" and expressed gratitude for the hospitality. He told of a Hispanic pastor who had won 80 people to the Lord.

Julius Thompson, director of the

helping to win Mississippi and the world to Jesus."

Kenneth Jones, pastor of Ephesus Church, said he wished everyone could hear Eunice Bryant's presentation on cults and their danger to our youths.



Marie & Oscar Bozeman

Chuck Moody, pastor, First Church, Morton, said, "Meeting the missionaries enabled our church to pray more intelligently for their needs. This personal contact is priceless and mission trips for our lay people will grow out of it."

John Sharp, director of missions for Scott Association, put the meeting together and made sure the missionaries would get to the right church. "We have some great pastors and lay leaders," said Sharp. "They really did the work."

Missionary leaders were: home missions — Tyson, Lupe Rando (Texas), Joycelyn Carrell (Ala.), Tom Lilly (La.); foreign missions — James Strange (Zimbabwe), Vic and Sharon Johnston (Brazil), Oscar Bozeman (Korea); state missions — Randy Tompkins (Sunday School Department, MBCB), Eunice Bryant (Interfaith Witness), and Thompson.

"Our task," said Thompson, "is



Sharon & Vic Johnston

Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, spoke on the value of the Cooperative Program in getting missionaries out.

"Our task," said Thompson, "is

Entertainers are needed for Cross Over Orlando outreach

ATLANTA (BP)—Calling all clowns, puppets, magicians, and singers. Organizers for Cross Over Orlando's block parties say they still need entertainers for six of their June 11 parties.

The parties will be Saturday, June 11, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Officials would like to hear from potential volunteers by May 25. Entertainers also are asked to attend a Friday night training session.

Block parties have been an effective witnessing tool for local churches in past Cross Over events. Last year, 374 people made professions of faith as a result of 24 block parties at Cross Over Houston.

Organizers for this year's event have prayed for 1,000 people to profess faith in Christ as a result of all Cross Over Orlando activities.

Anyone interested is asked to call coordinator Bill Cox at (615) 883-7024.

Texas moderate group pushing to end financial ties with SBC

By Art Toalston

there and now is the time" for the BGCT to cut its ties to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Texas Baptists Committed in the newsletter said it hopes a BGCT Cooperative Program study committee will propose a budget "that we as an organization can endorse." But: "Rest assured, if what comes out officially is the same old stuff, support the SBC just like always, with money automatically going from Dallas to Nashville, which means to us 'support the fundamentalists,' then we will oppose it."

Circulated in anonymity, the "Texas Baptists Committed Supportive Pastors Newsletter" stated, "No one will be publicly identified as receiving this newsletter." The newsletter was written by the organization's full-time coordinator, David Currie, in consultation with its top officers.

Citing the March 9 firing of Russell H. Dilday Jr. as president of Southwestern Seminary, the newsletter declared: "Because of the Dilday firing, the emotion is

Fellowship, or other Baptist entities.

William M. Pinson Jr., BGCT executive director, could not be reached for comment. Nor did Pinson publicly comment after news reports of the BGCT study committee consensus which, if maintained, will be placed in formal recommendation form this summer for the November BGCT sessions.

Texas Baptists Committed in its newsletter said it supports "a budget that stops sending money automatically anywhere outside the BGCT" because "Texas Baptists are so divided regarding the SBC, CBF (the moderates' Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), etc., that the official fair-to-everyone thing to do is tell our churches to send money however they as a church choose. The BGCT should get out of the 'official ties' financially to anyone. We focus on staying united in Texas, getting the BGCT out of SBC politics, and being fair to everyone."

Toalston writes for Baptist Press.

CBF directors approve unnamed western regional representative

GREENSBORO, N.C. (compiled from wire reports) — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship coordinating council approved a western regional representative, although his name was not revealed, and conducted other business in a meeting prior to the CBF annual general assembly held in Greensboro, N.C., May 5-7.

The council conducts business between annual assemblies of the CBF, a three-year-old group of moderate Southern Baptists critical of SBC leadership.

The regional, or field, representative "to work west of the Mississippi" concept was brought to the council by Cecil E. Sherman, the CBF chief executive officer. But his request came directly to the council and not through normal administrative channels. That, and the fact Sherman wouldn't identify the person, upset some on the 83-member council.

"I'm concerned about the idea of hiring a specific person, (yet) we don't know who it is," Nancy T. Ammerman said. "I want everything done in the open."

Ammerman, an associate professor and director of the Baptist studies program at Candler School of Theology at Emory University, Atlanta, said she was not so much concerned about the \$84,000 salary but the rationale for that amount.

Daniel Vestal, pastor of Tallwood Church, Houston; Ben Loring, pastor of First Church, Amarillo — both strong CBF supporters in Texas; and Lavonn Brown, pastor of First Church,

Norman, Okla., were mentioned in informal discussions following the meeting.

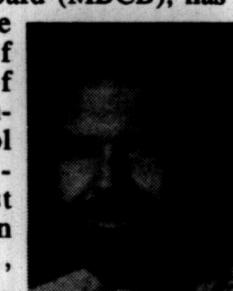
Sherman said he couldn't name the person because "he hasn't told his church yet."

But Associated Baptist Press reported the candidate is Bill Bruster, pastor of First Church, Abilene, Texas. Bruster acknowledged he had been approached about the job.

Randy Tompkins will direct department at Louisiana Convention

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Randy Tompkins, 46, consultant in the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), has accepted the position of director of church growth-Sunday School with the Louisiana Baptist Convention in Alexandria, effective July 1.



The Elk Tompkins City, Okla., native joined MBCB's Sunday School Department on Dec. 10, 1986, as a consultant for preschool and children, Vacation Bible School, and church growth. He assumed his present duties as consultant for general officers, associational work, and growth on Jan. 1, 1990.

Tompkins holds a bachelor of church music degree from Oklahoma Baptist University and a

master of religious education degree from Southwestern Seminary. He has been minister of education, music, and youth in a number of churches in Oklahoma and Texas.

The department Tompkins will direct in Louisiana consists of two full-time consultants, two full-time secretaries, and six contract workers. There are approximately 308,000 people enrolled in Sunday School in Louisiana, compared to about 360,000 enrollees in Mississippi, he said.

Tompkins and his wife Marlene live in Brandon and have three daughters: Keli, Kristin, and Kara. Their oldest daughter, Keli, will be married June 4 at Pine Lake Church in Brandon.

"Folks in Mississippi have received this poor boy from Oklahoma with warmth and graciousness beyond our expectations. My time in Mississippi has helped me expand my vision and abilities," Tompkins said.

"True Love Waits"

Louisiana school signs up majority of student body

BERWICK, La. (BP)—Stan Beaubouef knows one of his students at Berwick Junior High School is pregnant — and likely a second.

One of the girls is 13; the other, 14. They will be mothers before they get a driver's license.

That's a problem.

Beaubouef, the school's principal, also knows dozens upon dozens of the junior high students are committed to sexual abstinence, students who have pledged to refrain from premarital sex.

That's a solution.

The reasons for the problem are many and well-documented, from the ever-increasing pressures on families to the constant and graphic depiction of sex in the media.

"These kids are bombarded with sexual messages all the time — day in and day out," said Beaubouef.

On the other hand, the reason for the solution is almost unexplainable — a campaign to promote sexual abstinence that has exploded across religious lines and captured national attention.

A group of Christian churches recently brought the campaign to every junior and high school in the parish, complete with skits, songs, and commitment cards.

True Love Waits began as a Southern Baptist effort to encourage teens to abstain from sex before marriage. The concept was

simple. The effort urged them to sign commitment cards and support each other in their commitment.

Parents were urged to enter into a covenant with their children, and churches were urged to support both parents and teens in fulfilling the commitment.



The idea has moved beyond the local church setting and swept the nation, being featured in national news magazines, on national news programs, and in editorials of prominent newspapers.

It has been embraced by a host of organizations and denominations in this country — and abroad.

That seriousness showed in the rally presentation and in comments about the effort.

For instance, when Jackie

Street of Calumet Church in Patterson was asked why she was involved, she noted, "It's like somebody has to show an example."

Tracy Werline of Bayou Vista Church agreed. "As Christians we are to witness, and this is a form of witness to me."

That witness drew a range of response from students. Some dismissed the effort. Others listened attentively.

"We had kids who came up to us and said, 'This is great,'" David Spencer, minister of youth and music at Bayou Vista Church, Morgan City, said.

"We had kids who tore the cards up. We had kids who put vulgar messages on the cards. But I told our kids not to worry about response. Our job was to present the message," he said.

"Of the 450 kids at my school, 360 signed commitment cards. That was the highest percentage of any of the schools. But that means there are nearly 100 who did not sign the cards. So we haven't reached everyone," Beaubouef pointed out.

"We just have to keep saying it, keep telling these kids that they are destroying their lives," he insisted.

"We haven't made a real impact on the problem until we have 100% of the kids committed," Beaubouef said.

Fellowship declines to cut funds for SBC seminaries

GREENSBORO, N.C. (ABP)—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship won't end all funding of Southern Baptist seminaries but will encourage participating churches to direct their contributions toward Fellowship-endorsed theological schools.

Angered by the March 9 firing of popular Southern Baptist seminary president Russell Dilday, Fellowship members at their annual meeting debated, then defeated, a motion to exclude all Southern Baptist seminaries from all Fellowship funding plans.

Although the proposal was endorsed by the group's administrative committee, only about a third of those voting May 7 approved the plan — far short of the two-thirds necessary for enactment.

However, a less stringent proposal was immediately passed. It suggested that churches dissatisfied with Southern Baptist handling of theological education redirect their Fellowship contributions to the group's Vision 2000 budget, which already excludes all six Southern Baptist seminaries in favor of the moder-

ate organization's own efforts in theological education.

The debate over seminary funding was the only disputed matter in an otherwise quiet Fellowship meeting, which registered 4,337 participants and attracted 6,000 people to the largest session — fewer than expected.

During the May 5-7 meeting in Greensboro, N.C., the Fellowship appointed 10 new missionaries, adopted a six-month budget for 1995 totaling \$8.9 million, and heard reports on its various areas of ministry. Members also worshiped and attended workshops on 104 topics, ranging from self-care for ministers to hospitality evangelism, from desktop publishing to "sister images" in the Bible. An extended pre-assembly institute examined Christian responses to homosexuality.

All of the new missionaries, who will be working in a range of capacities from agriculture to theological education, have previous missions experience. They include Donald and Carolyn Berry of West Palm Beach, Fla.; Richard and Ellen Burnette,

Athens, Ala.; Arville and Shelia Earl, Prairie Village, Kan.; Preston and Nell Green, Van, Texas; and Jerry and Lorraine McAtee, Henderson, N.C.

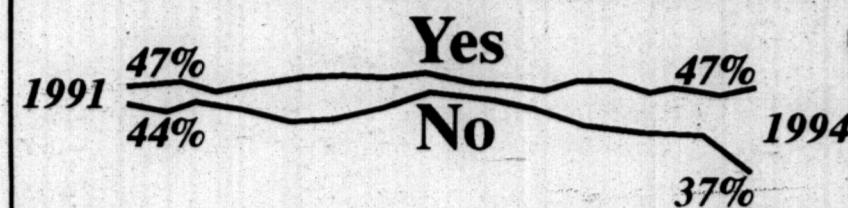
Keith Parks, CBF global missions coordinator, reminded the missionaries of people who have never even heard Jesus' name. Parks encouraged the crowd "to take God's perspective of this world." God has done everything; he has given his most precious life through Jesus so that no one must perish, Parks said.

The Fellowship was formed in 1990 by Southern Baptist moderates after their unsuccessful 15-year effort to wrest control of the Southern Baptist Convention from fundamental-conservatives. The loose-knit organization sponsors its own missions program and supports a variety of other ministries but also allows participating churches and individuals to send funds to traditional Southern Baptist causes. In 1993 the Fellowship received \$11.2 million from 1,225 churches, and 2,510 individuals. Southern Baptist causes received about a fourth of the funds.

Thursday, May 12, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

American teens answer:
Do you favor abortion rights?



Source: Gallup Youth Survey

American teenagers divided on abortion

PRINCETON, N.J. (ABP)—American teens are nearly evenly divided over the issue of abortion rights, but a majority believe teens should have to obtain parental consent before having an abortion.

These are among reports published in the first edition of "Youth Views," to be produced 10 times a year by the George Gallup International Institute. The newsletter is based on findings from the Gallup Youth Survey.

The percentage of American teens who say they favor abortion rights has remained steady at 47% since 1991, the newsletter reports.

However, the percentage of American teens who believe all abortion should be outlawed has dropped from 44% in 1991 to 37% in 1993.

The remaining 9% in 1991 and 16% in 1993 are either undecided or take a position somewhere between the two extremes.

Among demographic breakdowns on the abortion question, the newsletter says:

— There is no significant difference in attitudes between male and female teens.

— Teens ages 13-15 are more divided over abortion rights than teens ages 16-17.

— Young Catholics are more likely to favor abortion rights than young Protestants.

— Support for abortion is weakest in the South, while strongest in the East.

"Taken together, these statistics seem to indicate that the abortion debate is just as thorny for younger Americans as for older Americans, and just as divisive," writes newsletter editor Wendy Plump. "The youngest group of teens is the most evenly divided of all, guaranteeing that the abortion debate will rage on for the foreseeable future."

Gulfshore employees retire

Two housekeeping employees recently retired from service with Gulfshore Assembly. Mary Red retired Dec. 31, 1993, and Nell Prine retired March 31, 1994.

Red began working part-time



at Gulfshore in March 1978. In May of 1979, she was promoted to housekeeping supervisor, a position she held until her retirement in December. She and her husband Charles are members of First Church, Long Beach. They have three children and six grandchildren.

"Mary and Nell have done a wonderful job of helping meet the needs of Gulfshore guests," said Frank Simmons, Gulfshore manager. "They have always been willing to go more than the second mile in their jobs. They will be missed. We pray for God's continued blessings in their lives."

WMU extends deadline for Acteens video contest

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Acteens have until May 21 to submit videotaped cheers about their organization for a contest which will conclude at the National Acteens Convention (NAC).

NAC is held every five years for girls involved in Acteens, the missions organization for girls in grades 7-12. The meeting, to be held in Birmingham, Ala., June 21-24, is expected to attract more than 10,000 girls and their leaders.

The cheers will be judged on creativity, spirit, and teamwork (not technical skill) by a committee of Acteens and Acteens leaders.

Videos may be sent to: Acteens Cheer on Video, Highway 280 East, 100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, AL 35242-5235. An index card should be attached to the video listing the names of all participants; the church name; and the Acteens leader's name, address, and telephone number.



MSU BSU'ers in Honduras

Members of the Baptist Student Union at Mississippi State University recently participated in a mission trip to Honduras as part of the Mississippi/Honduras Partnership. The students spent a week in Tegucigalpa, working with La Joya Baptist Church in Sunday School, music, and worship services. The students were, from left: front row, Tanya Holly, June Scoggins, associate BSU director, Julie Clark, Glenda Pavon, Tiercy Kellum; back row, Rob Smith, Christopher Holder, Brad Benton, Kevin Downs, Ed Elkins, Rob Johnston, Charlie Buntyn, and Brad White.

Churches, work growing in Honduras, writes Stamps

By Stanley Stamps

The April 14 issue of *The Baptist Record* arrived a couple of days ago. The picture on the front page of Jerry Rankin of the Foreign Mission Board receiving a prayer chain from Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action from Oakton Church in Chantilly, Va., immediately caught my attention. Members of Jerusalem Church in Fairfax, Va., came in January to assist us in constructing a new sanctuary for Bethany Baptist Church here in El Progreso, Honduras.

Less than a month prior to the volunteer group's visit to Honduras, we began a new church start in the neighboring town of Santa Rita, 15 miles south of El Progreso.

On the first Sunday of the new year (1994) we began holding services. The new mission congregation was barely four weeks old when the volunteers from Virginia came to help.

It was a memorable experience as we held hands and prayed in English and Spanish, claiming the city for the Lord. Before us lay the cane fields and banana plantations, the heart of the economy of this sector of Honduras. On the edge of that valley is the city of Santa Rita with over 20,000 inhabitants.

The family who hosted the service had invited some neighborhood youths who are studying English to attend. We were happy to have six young men in their late teens attend. They were attentive and gave evidence of interest in the gospel. The following Sunday all six were present at Otoniel's house for our first Bible class using bilingual New Testaments a volunteer named Wally Knight from North Carolina had given me. Since that time, early in February, these young men have formed a major part of our small but growing congregation. Three have indicated their desire to

accept Christ as Savior.

It became obvious that where we were meeting was too small and future growth was limited. We began to put out feelers for property that we could buy on which to build for the new church. One day we received a letter from a prayer supporter, Beverly Shafer of Buffalo, N.Y., stating she had inaugu-



rated a "prayer blitz" for us and our fellow workers. That same week a man approached Otoniel and offered to sell a large lot near where we were meeting with the condition that a church be built on it.

Along with this and other blessings, that week we enrolled 25 in a seminary extension course I was teaching in El Progreso. Shortly afterward, we had a pastors' and missionaries' retreat at the Baptist Camp at Lake Yojoa which was attended by 81 persons, a record attendance for that type of encounter. David Michel and Leon Emery from Mississippi were the guest speakers. Their participation was an enriching experience and

Laity meeting needs — SBC lay people, staff members recount their ministries, roles

MEMPHIS (BP) — In a "Ministries of Baptist Laypeople" conference, a church history professor noted the New Testament and the early church had "no distinction between the clergy and the average church member — all were God's laos."

Rosalie Beck, associate professor of church history at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, was among the lay people and denominational workers who addressed the April 25-26 conference jointly sponsored with the Historical Commission and Southern Baptist Historical Society in Memphis, Tenn.

Beck, outlining different views on the history and value of lay

ministry, said early Baptists, adopting Martin Luther's renewed emphasis on the biblical doctrine of the priesthood of believers (the concept that every Christian is a priest in the universal ministry), also showed no distinction.

According to Beck, Landmarkism brought a change in Southern Baptists' understanding of the pastor, as Landmark leaders such as J.M. Pendleton asserted pastors "have an authority not belonging to other church members." As licensing and ordination became necessary for ministers, Sunday School and missions became the major areas for lay involvement.

Beck asked, "Will Baptists remain true to their heritage of equality in ministry before the Lord or will they move into a new structure based on business models of administration rather than biblical precepts?"

Ben Mitchell, Christian Life Commission director of biomedical and life issues, shared how Southern Baptists have met physical needs in times of crisis through Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union disaster relief units and teams. Mitchell noted the SBC mission boards, CLC, and other agencies also have been involved by calling attention to world hunger

through special emphases and annual mailings to churches.

"Followers of Christ have a moral obligation to God and their neighbors to attempt mercifully to meet the needs of those who are hurting, regardless of their personal or social merit..." Mitchell said.

Volunteer missionaries Walter Sandusky, a Memphis dentist who has served as a medical missionary to Venezuela and India, and Janice Davidson, a school teacher in Memphis who works each summer with Big A clubs and Acteens Activators, shared highlights of their experiences as members of the panel "To The Ends of the Earth: Lay Volunteers in Missions," moderated by Nell Bobo, Home Mission Board senior adult consultant.

Meeting participants toured the Mississippi Brotherhood Disaster Relief Unit and were served refreshments from the unit by crew members and SBC Brotherhood Commission staff.

Copies of "Ministries of Baptist Laypeople" conference presentations will be printed in the July 1994 issue of *Baptist History and Heritage* published by the Historical Commission. People interested in receiving the issue can call the commission at 1-800-966-BAPT.

Devotional —

Stressed to the MAX

By Charles Dampeer

The thud you hear in your chest cavity is stress. There's enough tension in America today to blow up the Universe. "Up tight" has become a disease.

Life today looks like a Roller Derby. Most people are an accident waiting to happen.

It's not only axes that fly off the handle. Stand in line if you want to dig a hole and climb in.

"Tighter than a drum" describes the heartbeat of this "how can I go on?" generation. This age is flying faster than a barrel plunging over Niagara Falls. "Hurry up, get out of my way, I'm not going anywhere, but I want to get there first," is the prevailing mood.

Cries of "Help! I want to get off the merry-go-round," are heard everywhere and in different ways. But not much changes except the head spins faster, the tears flow more freely, tension reaches a record pitch, and the grave fills up quicker.

Success! What a joke! The headache you suffer is not normal. It is just the price you pay going through life without much meaning.

"Oh, God, where are you?"

Sad, but I'm simply expressing what most people are feeling. You're one of them, aren't you? Me too, sometimes.

We're part of the downbeat generation that runs, rips, rants, and raves.

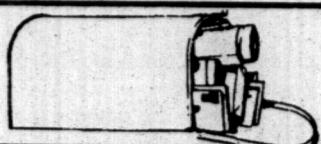
Psalm 107 helps me. Four rescues occur in the refrain, "They cried out to the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them from their distresses."

- God rescued a man wandering in the desert,
- A prisoner in chains,
- A man drawn near the gates of death,
- A ship in a storm.

So when you're blue, look beyond the blue sky and see God in his heaven, but don't gaze there too long. Rather, look beside you. God is among his people.

God will rescue us too.

Dampeer, a Mississippian, is pastor of First Church, Herrin, Ill., and president of Illinois State Association.



Letters to the editor



Masonry is religion

Editor:

The Home Mission Board in one statement condemns "universalism," yet ducks the issue of Freemasonry. That suggests they didn't do their homework when they were commissioned to study Freemasonry.

They quote a Masonic editor who claims, "Freemasonry, despite what other people say,

does not make theological statements... other than belief in a deity."

Let me quote, not from "other people," but from **Morals and Dogma**, by Albert Pike, approved and published by the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree of Freemasonry.

They will purposely mislead the public: "Masonry, like all religions,... conceals its secrets from all except... the elect..." (p. 104).

They will mislead their own:

"Masonry is not a religion..." (p. 161).

They will contradict (their own) teachings: "Every Masonic lodge is a temple of religion; and its teachings are instruction in religion" (p. 213).

Freemasonry teaches "universalism." "Masonry, around whose altars the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Brahmin, the followers of Confucius and Zoroaster, can assemble as brethren and unite in prayer to the God who is

above all the Baalim..." (p. 226).

Its beliefs have their source in the occult book **The Kabalah**, which they claim to be the source of the Bible: "The Holy Kabalah... was carried from Chaldea by Abraham, taught to the Egyptian priesthood by Joseph, recovered and purified by Moses, concealed under symbols in the Bible..." (p. 97).

And they teach disdain for dogmatic folks like me who believe the Bible is the only true revelation of God: "The Teachers, even of Christianity, are in general, the most ignorant of the true meaning of that which they teach. There is no book of which so little is known as the Bible" (p. 105).

Perhaps the Department of Interfaith Witnessing, which helps us discern the syncretism of other religions such as Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses, would help uncover the syncretism of Freemasonry as well.

Thomas Burris
Tylertown

curse the darkness."

Thomas E. Hager, grand master Grand Lodge of Tennessee Hermitage, Tenn.

Editor's Note: Since the two preceding letters represent both sides of Freemasonry, and since the SBC is no longer considering it, hopefully we've had all the letters needed on the subject.

Help for cadets

Editor:

The Baptist Student Union at the United States Air Force Academy would like to contact the men and women coming to the academy June 29 and 30 to begin training as basic cadets. For those arriving June 29, we will meet them at the airport, provide free lodging, meals, and transportation, and take them to the academy at the appointed time. We would also like to meet those coming on June 30 and provide them transportation to the academy. This is an opportunity to meet smiling faces and make new Christian friends before beginning basic cadet training. If pastors, parents, relatives, friends, or new cadets will contact us with name, address, and telephone, we will correspond with them to secure flight arrival times and provide further information.

The Air Force Academy Baptist Student Union is a widely recognized organization and is here for the purpose of contributing to cadets' spiritual growth. Through the support of our Home Mission Board, Colorado Baptist General Convention, Pikes Peak Association, and churches, the BSU provides a most active and effective ministry. We seek to minister to cadets through involvement in Bible study, discipleship training, evangelism training, local church participation, worship, fellowship, and mission endeavors. We invite all new incoming cadets to join with us.

Please contact us at 550 W. Woodmen Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80919, phone (719) 599-9094. Also, for anyone attending West Point or the Naval Academy, similar ministries are provided. At West Point contact Bill Blackwell, 29 Sheldon Dr., Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY 12518, phone (914) 534-3944. At the Naval Academy, contact Terry Minchow-Proffit, 210 Hanover St., Annapolis, MD 21401, phone (301) 263-0963.

Dwain Gregory, director
Baptist Student Ministries
Colorado Springs, Colo.

HEALTHCARING

FOR THE RECORD

National Hospital Week: A Focus on Health Care in Mississippi

At Baptist, healthcaring for the whole family includes a myriad of educational programs and support services. The following service areas represent a few examples of Baptist's response to the health care challenges of the family and community.

• The Healthcaring Center for Women offers a comprehensive women's resource center for health education and preventative care, health screening and support group information and educational needs of women in all phases of their lives.

• The Diabetes Learning Center offers both inpatient and outpatient services and education on how to monitor and control diabetes. MBMC's Out-patient Diabetes Education Program is the first in Mississippi to be recognized by the American Diabetes Association.

• The Cancer Center at Baptist offers patients and their families information, education and inspiration through several specialized support groups.

• Baptist Fitness Center offers exercise therapy for recovering patients and wellness activities for people who want to improve their overall fitness levels.

• Education Services Department develops ongoing educational classes and seminars on a wide variety of health-related topics.

• The Birthplace at Baptist offers a variety of family-oriented programs to help the whole family — parents, grandparents and siblings — prepare for the arrival of a new baby.

• The Cancer Center at Baptist offers patients and their families information, education and inspiration through several specialized support groups.

Masonry not religion

Editor:

Freemasonry is not a religion, nor is it a substitute for religion. It requires of its members belief in God as part of the obligation of every responsible adult, but advocates no sectarian faith or practice. Masonic ceremonies include prayer, both traditional and *extempore*, to reaffirm each individual's dependence on God and to seek divine guidance. Freemasonry is open to men of any faith, but religion may not be discussed at Masonic meetings. Freemasonry lacks the basic elements of religion:

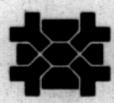
1) It has no dogmas or theology, no wish or means to enforce religious orthodoxy.

2) It offers no sacraments.

3) It does not claim to lead to salvation by works, by secret knowledge, or by any other means. The secrets of Freemasonry are concerns with modes of recognition, not with the means of salvation.

Freemasonry is far from indifferent toward religion. Without interfering in religious practice, it expects each member to follow his own faith and to place his duty to God above all other duties. Its moral teachings are acceptable to all religions.

I hope this clarification of Freemasonry and religion will enlighten the critics of this ancient craft. In other words, "Better to light one candle than to



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

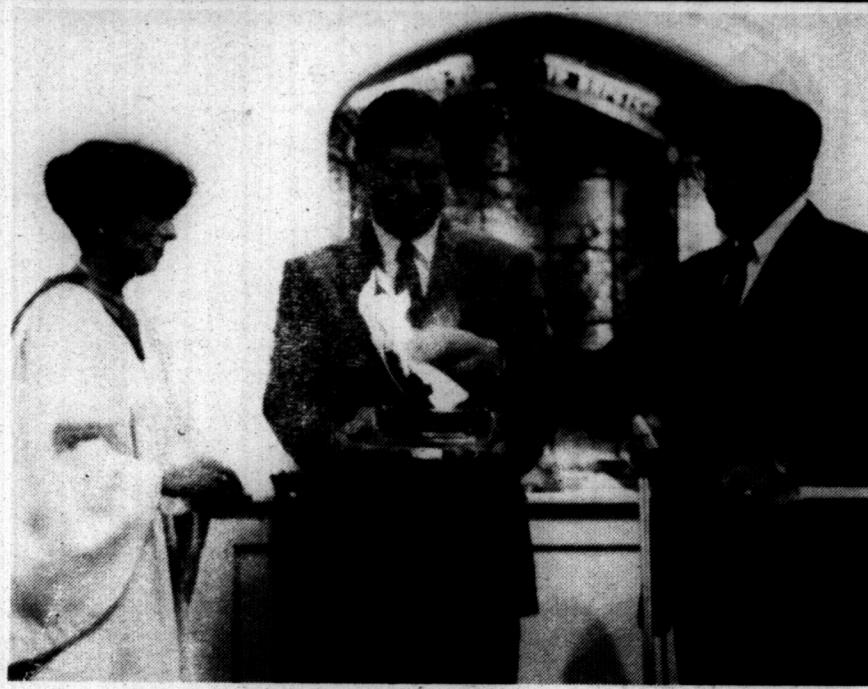
We're healthcaring for the whole family.

Young names native sons to two key SBC committees

HOUSTON (BP) — Members of the Credentials and Tellers Committees for the June 14-16 Orlando, Fla. meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention have been named by SBC President H. Edwin Young.

Mississippians named by Young include Roy V. Sims, layperson, First Church, Jackson, Credentials Committee; and Phil Hanberry, pastor, Juniper Grove Church, Poplarville, Tellers Committee.

Just for the Record



First Church, Durant, recently held a note burning ceremony to observe the retirement of the debt on its education building and fellowship hall. Donna Self (left) was chair of the Together We Build campaign. Tom Humphries (right) chaired the Together We Build follow-up committee. Jerry Bishop (center) is pastor.

Enterprise Church, Liberty, will celebrate its 40th anniversary on May 15. Services will include Sunday School at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. worship service with Mark Carraway, covered dish luncheon served in fellowship hall at noon; and 1:30 p.m. service with special music. The minutes and history of the church and recognition of former members will be presented. Odell Tebo is pastor.

New Hope Church, Foxworth, exceeded its goal of \$1,500 for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions. The total amount received was \$1,994.

L.I.F.T. (Ladies in Fellowship Together) Conference will be

held at **Immanuel Church, Greenwood**, from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. on May 15. Bonnie Dawson, host of "Let's Talk" on WFCA, radio station in French Camp, will be the special speaker. For more information, call 453-8242.

Antioch Church, Prentiss, recently held its RA Recognition Service for Austin Hamilton, Corey Byrd, James Davis, Bill Hartzog, Chris Hawsey, James Polson, and Chris Byrd. The leaders are Bill Lindsey and Estelle Lindsey.

Mississippi College will be offering local area freshmen students half-price tuition and a wide variety of courses as the summer session gets underway June 6.

Homecomings

Cornersville, Potts Camp: May 15; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds at noon; 1 p.m. singing; New Creations, Pontotoc, guest singers; Philip Cooper, Dumas, guest speaker; Samuel L. Cox, pastor.

Stanton, Natchez: May 15; services, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, noon; 1:30 p.m. singing; Gospel Echoes, Jackson, guest singers; Albert Parsons, Hazlehurst, guest speaker; Steve Purvis, pastor.

Clear Creek, Oxford: May 22; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall; Arthur Leslie, guest speaker; Charles H. Lipe, pastor.

First, Marion: May 22; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds at noon; John Cook, former pastor, Birmingham, Ala., guest speaker; Walter M. Blackman, pastor.

First, Lambert: May 22; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall; memorial service at

1 p.m.; James Jeter, Bedford, Texas, guest speaker; Stephen J. Huber, pastor.

Lincoln Road, Hattiesburg: May 22; Barry Clingan, Brandon, guest speaker; dinner in fellowship hall at noon; 1 p.m. singing; Kenneth McCordle, Madison, guest singer; L.D. Golmon, pastor.

Black Hawk, Coila: May 22; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall; afternoon gospel singing with the Southern Cross; revival, May 23-27; C.C. Burns, evangelist; Kevin Smith, music.

New Zion, Crystal Springs: May 29; dinner on grounds at noon; 1:30 p.m. singing; The Gospel Messengers, Florence, guest singers; David Brooks, Warrenton, S.C., guest speaker; Leroy J. Brewer Jr., pastor.

Bellevue (Pontotoc County): May 15; worship, 11 a.m.; noon fellowship meal; afternoon singing; Tim McMillen, guest speaker; Lamar Pickens, pastor.

Half-price tuition is being made available to first-time entering freshmen for the summer terms only who apply through the Financial Aid Office. The first term will open with registration on Monday, June 6, from 9-11:30 a.m. The second term will begin on Monday, July 11. For additional information call the Office of Admissions at 1-800-738-1236.

The youths of Southside Church, Lucedale, will sponsor a dinner meeting May 20 at 7 p.m. in the George County Senior Citizen Building. J. Garland McKee, director of the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will be the guest speaker. Cost for the meal is \$6. For more information, call Southside Church at (601) 947-3136. Keith Johnson is pastor, Southside.

First Church, Byram, recently observed "Hearts for Missions" month to help reach its combined goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions. The church exceeded its goal by \$1,674.22, with an offering of \$7,674.22. Carl Prewitt is pastor.

Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action of Big Ridge Church, D'Iberville, recently collected \$212.41 for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions by collecting pennies and small change. Mike Priest is pastor.

Missionary News

Diane Smith, missionary to the Ivory Coast, is in the States (address: 1315 Simwood Pl., Jackson, MS 39211). She was born in Collins and considers Jackson her hometown.

Robert and Margaret Fortenberry, missionaries to Botswana, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: P.O. Box 1559, Gaborone, Botswana). He was born in Moss Point, and considers Jackson his hometown. The former Margaret McKinley was born in Kentucky. She is the daughter of missionaries and grew up in Gweru, Zimbabwe.

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MC commencement set, May 14

Mississippi College will hold its commencement ceremonies May 14 at 2 p.m. in the A.E. Wood Coliseum on campus.

Howell Todd, newly-appointed president of the college, will be the speaker. He will also present honorary doctorate degrees to Bill R. Baker, Horace C. Holmes, and Randall W. Turner.

Baker, pastor of First Church, Clinton, and Holmes, president of Southwest Mississippi Community College in Summit, will receive

Turner

Turner

the doctor of letters degree.

Turner, pastor of First Church, Laurel, will be awarded the doctor of divinity degree.

The Mississippi College School of Law will for the first time hold a separate graduation and hooding ceremony, May 14 at 11 a.m. at First Church, Clinton.



Baker

Guides for senior adoption ministry

A need for nursing homes residents is regular visits by relatives and friends. Churches can help meet this need through a senior adult adoption program called "Each One Needs One."

This ministry is designed to find and reach those senior adults in nursing homes who need and want someone from the commu-

nity to be a special friend to them. The goal of the ministry is that every nursing home will someday have a church to adopt its residents as special senior friends.

For more information, or to order volunteer manuals, write First Baptist Church, 300 East First Ave., Easley, SC 29640.

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Staff Changes

Bill Street has been called as pastor of Immanuel Church, Olive Branch, effective March 27. He was formerly pastor of Grace Church, Jackson, Tenn. Street is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary.

Freedom Church, Laurel, has called Steve Nixon as minister of youth effective May 1. His previous place of service was First Church, Beaumont. He received his education at Clarke College. Tracy Hipp is pastor.

Wade Church, Pascagoula, has called Jeffrey T. Hughes as minister of youth effective April 10. A native of Shreveport, La., he received his education at Louisiana State University and is presently attending New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Princeton, La. W.L. "Bill" Barton is pastor.

Immanuel Church, Greenwood, has called Paul Ganey of

Montgomery, Ala., as minister of education and music, effective March 27. He previously served First Church, Belle Chasse, La. Ganey is a graduate of Clarke College, William Carey College, University of Mobile (Ala.), and New Orleans Seminary.

Siloam Church in Franklin County, has called David A. Crowe as pastor effective April 16. His previous pastorate was Norwood Church, Norwood, La.

John Reid was called as pastor of Ford's Creek Church, Pearl River Association, April 17. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and has attended New Orleans and Southwestern Seminaries. He previously Reid served as associate pastor at North Columbia Church, Columbia.

Revival Dates

Thorn Hill, Pelahatchie: May 20-21; youth revival; 7 p.m.; Gary Kelly, Pine Grove, Heidelberg, evangelist; May 22, homecoming services at 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds; 1 p.m. singing featuring The Shepherds of Love; Rudy James is pastor.

Revival Results

New Zion, Crystal Springs: April 10-13; Bobby Williamson, Brandon, evangelist; Barry Pounds, Baton Rouge, La., music; four professions of faith; Leroy Brewer Jr., pastor.

Thursday, May 12, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Names in the News

Mary Rowe Siler, 89, died April 21 of heart failure. Services were held April 24 in Meridian with burial in Lexington, Ky. She was the widow of the late J.W.T. Siler, who served as pastor of churches in Chalybeate, Marigold, Calhoun City, Arcola, Cary, Anguilla, and New Hebron. She is survived by a son, William T. Siler of Monticello; two daughters, Fran Fleming of Meridian and Margaret Kaiser of Georgetown, Ky.; a brother; six grandsons; and seven great-grandchildren.

James Yarbrough was recently honored on his 20th anniversary as pastor at Gum Branch Church, Sturgis. Paul Blanchard, director of missions for Winston Association, presented to Yarbrough a certificate of recognition from the association. Yarbrough holds the longest tenure of any Yarbrough pastor in Winston Association.

financial officer for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. He currently is director of financial services and controller for Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, where he has worked since 1981. Effective June 15 he will become coordinator of financial and administrative services for the Fellowship. In the new position, created last February by the Fellowship's coordinating council, Skeen will manage all financial affairs for the Fellowship's national offices in Atlanta.

G. Ted Taylor, minister of education and administration at First Church, Starkville, has accepted the position as professor of Christian Studies at Campbellsville College in Campbellsville, Ky. His ministry at First Church will conclude on Taylor May 22 and he will assume his new position on Aug. 20.



First Church, Leakesville, recently licensed Cliff Hardin (right) to the ministry. Hardin will enter Mississippi College in the fall. He is available for supply, and can be reached at (601) 394-2481. Gregg Thomas, pastor (left) presented the certificate to Hardin.

Nations International School UN Student Conference held March 4-5. The conference dealt with the theme of "International Responsibility: Power and Politics." She is a junior at OIS. Her family will return to the United States in December, 1995 for furlough and are scheduled to live in Clarksdale.

NASHVILLE (BP) — Charles H. Johnson will retire as director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's National Student Ministry, effective July 1. Johnson, 60, made the announcement May 5 in a meeting with staff members. "It has been an honor to serve Southern Baptists through my work at the Baptist Sunday School Board," Johnson said. "The Sunday School Board represents one of the greatest forums for Christian leadership in the Christian world. I've had the honor of being on stage for 12 years and it's been a privilege."

COLUMBUS, Ohio (BP) — Will Pollard, a Baptist worker in Ohio since 1976, has become editor of the Ohio Baptist Messenger after the April 30 retirement of Theo E. Sommerkamp, editor of the paper the past 18 years. Pollard has been director of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio's Sunday School Department since 1989 and, from 1978-89, was associate director of the Sunday School and Church Architecture Departments. He was director of religious education and promotion for the Greater Dayton Association of Baptists from 1976-78.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Mary Ellen Price, an account executive with a Nashville public relations firm, has been named director of communications at the Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Price has been an account executive with Dye, Van Mol and Lawrence Public Relations the past three years. In 1989, she worked at the agency for five months before accepting a Rotary Foundation scholarship to study at the University of Adelaide in South Australia. After completing a B.A. (honors) degree in English, she returned to Dye, Van Mol and Lawrence.

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Response to O.S. Hawkins regarding the virgin birth

By Cecil Sherman

O.S. Hawkins is pastor of First Church, Dallas. A few weeks ago, Hawkins used his church paper to address the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The unjust and inflammatory rhetoric of O.S. Hawkins and others must be challenged.

More than a decade ago in Hamburg, Germany, a teacher in a Baptist seminary was fired for not believing in the virgin birth.

The faculty at Ruschlikon Seminary protested the firing; they thought it severe. Yet the Ruschlikon faculty signed a statement to the point that all of them did believe in the virgin birth.

I was asked by James Hefley what I thought about the matter. Keep in mind this was about 1982-83. I said several things:

First, I did and do believe in the virgin birth. There has been no time when I did not believe in the virgin birth.

The question was hypothetical. It was a "what do you think?" question. I said I thought other things should be taken into account than just the doctrine of the virgin birth.

James Hefley took my statements and wove them into a piece he did for Christianity Today back in August of 1983. And now "out of the blue," O.S. Hawkins comes forward with this quotation and wants to measure the theology of the leadership of CBF. What does this mean?

This is a diversion. O.S.

Hawkins' friends fired Russell Dilday, and most good Baptists are angry. It is time to divert Baptists from what has happened at Southwestern by resorting again to the "liberalism" ploy. If Baptists buy this, they are pretty gullible.

Note that I believe in the virgin birth. I am being made liberal because I said at one time that I was not sure we ought to fire every professor who doesn't.

To the bottom line: Is the leadership of the Fellowship liberal? Not surprisingly, it depends on the people with whom you are speaking.

Some people have a vested interest in making CBF leadership appear liberal. So, O.S. Hawkins and Morris Chapman will tell you I am liberal. They are now going out of their way to make Russell Dilday liberal.

Do Fellowship people believe some things differently from present SBC leadership? We do. We believe preachers are outside the Baptist way when they are "rulers of their churches." We believe God sometimes calls women to ministry tasks, and judging by the life and work of many women, evidently God has touched their lives, called them, used them. We do believe the Baptist idea on church and state, and we think that idea should be strictly enforced. Helwys, Williams, Backus, Leland, and Dawson were right and they were Baptists.

We believe the Bible from cover to cover, but we use it quite differently from present SBC leadership. Does this make us liberal? One group will tell you Yes. I don't think so. You will have to make up your mind.

If you think this kind of material makes me liberal, you will probably back away from the Fellowship. But that puts you in a predicament. Then you have to hurry to the arms of people who have secret meetings, often don't tell the truth, fire good people, and do all these things in the name of "believing the Bible."

I regret this kind of piece. I know this will not put the matter to rest. Mean people with political agendas will continue to say Cecil Sherman doesn't believe in the virgin birth. These people don't want truth; they want to discredit the Fellowship and commend their political/theological movement to Baptists.

On one point I agree with O.S. Hawkins completely. He wants Baptists to look at the SBC and the Fellowship and compare. I do, too. And you can see by the tone and frankness of this article that I trust Baptists. I've said some things not usually said; they are long overdue. I've trusted myself and CBF to full disclosure. But if you discredit the Fellowship on this account, you need to rethink your priorities.

Sherman is CBF chief executive officer.

Calls to Senator Lott urged on SAFE Act bill

A legislative alert concerning the SAFE Act pending before the U.S. Senate has been issued by the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the Christian Life Commission (CLC) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Senate Bill 674, the Sensible Advertising and Family Education (SAFE) Act, requires seven rotating health and safety warning messages for all alcohol advertisements on radio and television, as well as in all newspapers, magazines, and promotional materials.

The SAFE Act is scheduled for a May 17 vote in the Senate Commerce Committee. Mississippi Senator Trent Lott is a member of the committee.

Broadcasters and the alcohol industry have waged a furious campaign to weaken or kill the proposal, and the two groups may be successful unless their influence is offset by popular demand in favor of the bill, proponents say.

The CAC and CLC are urging Mississippi churches and individuals to call or fax a message of support for Senate Bill 674 to Sen. Lott. His office telephone number in Washington, DC is (202) 224-6253. His fax number is (202) 224-2262. A first-class letter would likely not arrive in Sen. Lott's office before the vote on May 17.

For more information, call CAC at (601) 968-3800.

Harold Walker dies at age 72

Harold Walker Sr., 72, retired pastor of Goodhope Church, Perry County, died of cancer May 6 at his home in Ellisville. Services were held May 8 at Jones Funeral Home with burial in Jordan Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife Lugenia; sons Harold Jr., minister of music for West Ellisville Church; Dennis of Laurel, and Bob of Pascagoula; daughter, Ella Margaret Graham of Ellisville; two brothers; two sisters; eight grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

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1 CORINTHIANS 13

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CBF applauds Genesis commentary author Ralph Elliott's "courage"

By Herb Hollinger

GREENSBORO, N.C. (BP) — A Southern Baptist seminary professor fired for his views on the biblical book of Genesis was honored for courage as the general assembly of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship moved into its second day at the Greensboro, N.C., Coliseum Complex.

Delegates for the May 5-7 annual CBF meeting gathered for a "Festival Service of Praise" Thursday evening followed by business reports, discussion groups, and worship Friday morning. Coliseum officials said between 4,500 and 5,000 people attended the Thursday evening service while about half that attended the Friday morning session.

The CBF is a three-year-old group of moderate Baptists critical of SBC leadership.

At the May 6 plenary business session Ralph H. Elliott, controversial former professor at Midwestern Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., was honored with the Whitsett Society's Baptist Courage Award.

Elliott, retired and interim pas-

tor of First (American) Baptist Church, Rochester, N.Y., was fired in 1962, according to CBF officials, "not for heresy... but because he would not withdraw his book on Genesis."

Although Elliott's book, *The Message of Genesis*, was discontinued by the Baptist Sunday School Board following an uproar, Elliott said he would seek another publisher. Trustees fired him for "insubordination" on Oct. 25, 1962.

Walter Shurden, professor and chairman of the religion department at Mercer University in Macon, Ga., told the delegates Elliott "followed conscience, rather than the crowd." Shurden said Elliott was a "son of the South, native of Virginia and a graduate of Carson-Newman College (in Tennessee)."

His views were called "... liberalism, pure and simple, a sort of rationalistic criticism (which) can lead (the SBC) only to... disintegration as a great New Testament denomination," by K. Owen White, influential pastor of First Church, Houston, at the time.

In a "state of the Fellowship" address Friday morning, the CBF's chief executive officer, Cecil Sherman, painted a picture of growth and effectiveness for the fledgling denomination.

"We added 369 churches in 1993 for a total of 1,210 (contributing to the CBF)," Sherman said. "We effectively worked with \$6,700,000 in 1993 compared to \$2,600,000 in 1992 to do CBF work."

"We had 22 missionaries after the 1993 meeting and we will have 41 after tonight's meeting," Sherman told the delegates.

Sherman said CBF is primarily a "missions delivery system" with 80% of the budget going to missions.

"CBF is getting out of diapers," Sherman said. "We have a journey to go, work to do."

A Friday night "global missions celebration" featured R. Keith Parks, CBF missions coordinator, and the appointment and "blessing" of new missionaries by the assembly.

Hollinger is director, Baptist Press.

Uniform Freed to grow



By Doug Bain
Galatians 4

The danger of rejecting freedom (vv. 8-11). Paul was aware of numerous dangers in Christian experience, two of which are becoming a castaway and returning to the bondage of rule-keeping religion. Concern with the second danger seems to animate this letter to Galatian believers.

Paul knew how delicate an experience freedom actually is. Corinthian believers, in an urban avant-garde context, were flaunting their freedom, making the most of it. Galatian believers, in a context saturated with emphasis on law observance, were rejecting their freedom, seeking the false security of outer conformity. In Christian experience we often are inclined to return to the "weak and beggarly elemental spirits" (v. 9). As in verse 3, this may well be a reference to outer guidelines that novices are supposed to follow only until the formation of internal perspective occurs. When character develops, conduct flows from that rather than from conformity.

Paul reflects another fear in verse 11 — that all his investment would be in vain and his "children" would be fixated in childhood. Returning to bondage would be like the Hebrew children deciding to return to Egyptian slavery. "At least the Pharaoh has a face and Egypt is a place. Who is this God Yahweh, and where is this land of promise, flowing with who knows what? I say let's see if we can't negotiate the sea again and return before this desert eats us alive!" And so, in Christian experience, walking in faith becomes not such a liberating experience when cynical doubt sets in and when the desire to ensure success consumes us. And before the sun sets the return to "Egypt" is already underway. The security of the brick pit is more appealing than the burden of freedom, the whip easier to make friends with than is freedom, the burden of sinful addiction more appealing than is freedom.

Resisting the truth (vv. 12-16). The Galatian believers were in addition resisting the truth (v. 16) and as a consequence resisting Paul as well. But formerly they did not reject him because he had courage in the face of physical problems — do they now reject him because he has courage in the face of truth (v. 14)?

We hunger after truth, we would fight for it, we ponder over it, and debate it. Yet truth is something from which we run. It intimidates us, we skirt it, misrepresent it, evade it. We may "hold these truths to be self evident," but we often hold them remotely. The Galatian believers apparently received truth, yet held it at arm's length. When it got too close, they turned defensive. Paul could say, "Do you now see me as enemy because I hold out to you the truth?"

Concern for Christian maturity (vv. 17-20). These esteemed teachers that are leading you astray and back into bondage to enforced rule-keeping conformity (v. 10) — they do not have your best interests at heart. They really want to elevate themselves (v. 17b) by keeping you in subjection to themselves! Rather than leading you to your own maturity, they want to keep you in a neurotic state of infantile dependency. When those motives are operational, maturity, freedom, fellowship, competent leadership — all are in jeopardy. Major problems are on the horizon and in the heart. Heavy-handed leadership with the hidden agenda of masking insecurity by dictatorially domineering robs innocent sheep of the opportunity to grow, serve, and be free. Anyone who is called to Christian work is not called to dominate, to control, or to hold people in submissive subjection. Christian leadership is to lead believers toward maturity, so they can think and act and decide and read and vote and lead responsibly, growing out of their own experience with Jesus Christ and his Body. In these verses (17-20) the text addresses the issue of leadership that has a concern for Christian maturing. Paul reflects such a concern as he uses the poignant description of "Christ being formed in them" (v. 19).

No longer rejecting freedom, no longer resisting truth, no longer nurturing immaturity, may Christ be formed in us, bringing us to the full measure of our stature in Christ Jesus, so that we are indeed freed to grow!

Bain is professor of biblical and related studies, Blue Mountain College.

Bible Book The work of the Holy Spirit



By Dan Howard
John 15-16

The world in which we live appears to be growing more anti-Christian with each passing day. From what Jesus stated in these verses we should not be surprised. It is a blessing to know that we have the Holy Spirit to strengthen us as we witness for him.

Jesus encourages his disciples (15:17-21). A word of encouragement from others is very uplifting. Jesus sought to encourage his disciples. Before he encourages them, he reminds them that they are to be characterized by love. This love for one another would be needed to combat the hatred they would encounter from the world.

Jesus indicates that his disciples should not be astounded that the world would respond to them with hatred. Jesus stated that because the world hated and persecuted him, his followers could expect the same kind of treatment. The word "world" refers to the world of people without Jesus and opposed to him.

Jesus encouraged his disciples by stating that even though the majority of people in the world may reject them, there will be some who will respond positively to their message.

The witness of the Spirit and of the disciples (15:26-27). Into a world of hatred and persecution Jesus stated that he would send the Comforter. As we saw in our study of John 14:16-18, the Comforter is our helper and the very presence of Jesus dwelling in our lives.

Jesus mentions several characteristics of the Holy Spirit in these two verses. First, he is sent to us as a comfort and help. Second, he comes from the Father. Third, he is the Spirit of Truth. Fourth, he bears witness of Jesus.

The disciples, with the help of the Holy Spirit, were to bear a witness for Jesus. A witness can only testify to what he knows. Jesus' disciples had been with him from the beginning of his public ministry and they could testify to the life of Jesus.

The work of the Spirit: reprove the world (16:7-11). Jesus stated that his leaving was to the disciples' advantage. As long as Jesus was physically present on this earth, he was limited by physical constraints of being in one place and ministering to only one group. The Holy Spirit has no limitations.

The work of the Holy Spirit is to reprove the world in three areas. The word "reprove" means to both convict and to convince. The three areas in which the Holy Spirit will convict are sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Holy Spirit is the one who convicts a person of his sinfulness. The Holy Spirit convicts a person that he has no righteousness. Our self righteousness is as filthy rags according to Isaiah 64:6. We have no righteousness apart from Christ. Another area of conviction for the Spirit is judgment. The Holy Spirit seeks to convict us to prepare us for the coming judgment. Jesus stated in regard to judgment that Satan has already been judged and condemned.

The work of the Spirit: guide the believer (16:12-15). The Lord knows when we are ready to bear or grasp the things he decides to reveal to us. Jesus identifies several ways the Holy Spirit guides believers. First, he will guide believers into all the truth. The truth refers to the truth about Jesus. Second, the Holy Spirit will guide believers by speaking the Truth. The Holy Spirit will only speak the truth because he is the Spirit of Truth. Third, he will guide by disclosing things to come. All that the Spirit does will bring glory to the name of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit has all the resources of the Father and the Son to guide us through this life. May we allow him to guide and comfort us.

Howard is pastor, Woodville Church, Woodville.

Life and Work Serving faithfully



By Billie Buckley
Philippians 2

It was a simple question, but it got my attention. Let me ask you that same question today: What are you like when there is no quiet organ music, no light coming through stained glass windows, no padded pew, no comfortable cooled surroundings, and no dressed-up people around you?

I related to that question because for years I had taught in schools where quiet was foreign to my students. The loud voices of unbalanced parents and neglected neighborhoods drowned out all organ music. In the place of stained glass windows were broken windows and broken lives. My sanctuary was surrounded by drug dealers and dives.

No pious person who breaks easily would have survived, much less learned to serve faithfully in those conditions.

How can we learn to serve faithfully without breaking? Philippians 2:12-30 gives us the answer to our question.

To avoid breaking, allow God to work in you (vv. 12-13). Paul urged the Philippians to see God as a worker. Do you recognize the fact that God's primary revelation of himself is that of a worker and creator? (Reflect on Genesis 1:1-25.) If we are created in his image, then we must be his co-worker. Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God make up a divine partnership. Jesus never broke in being true to God's purpose because he joined his Father in accomplishing his work.

The Holy Spirit reveals to us God's work. We may have to bend and stretch to join him, but we will never break.

To avoid breaking, live true to the gospel (vv. 14-16). Paul declared he would be encouraged by knowing the Philippians were living out the truth of the gospel before those around them.

How do we live out the truth of the gospel? We live it out by following ethical standards of honesty and integrity.

Do we as Christians receive high marks by the world for being honest and reflecting integrity? I'm afraid many have low opinions of us because these truthful qualities are lacking. Their relationship with God and his church is broken because we as Christians don't use every opportunity to "Let our light so shine that others may see our good works and glorify our Father, who is in heaven."

To avoid breaking, serve joyfully and sacrificially (vv. 17-18). Paul stated his own willingness to give his all in joyful, sacrificial service. In fact, we could say that Paul was driven to be a leader worthy of being modeled by other believers.

It's one thing to take care of a task at hand. It's another thing to do it joyfully with the right motive and attitude. This joy keeps us flexible so as not to break under the weight of our service.

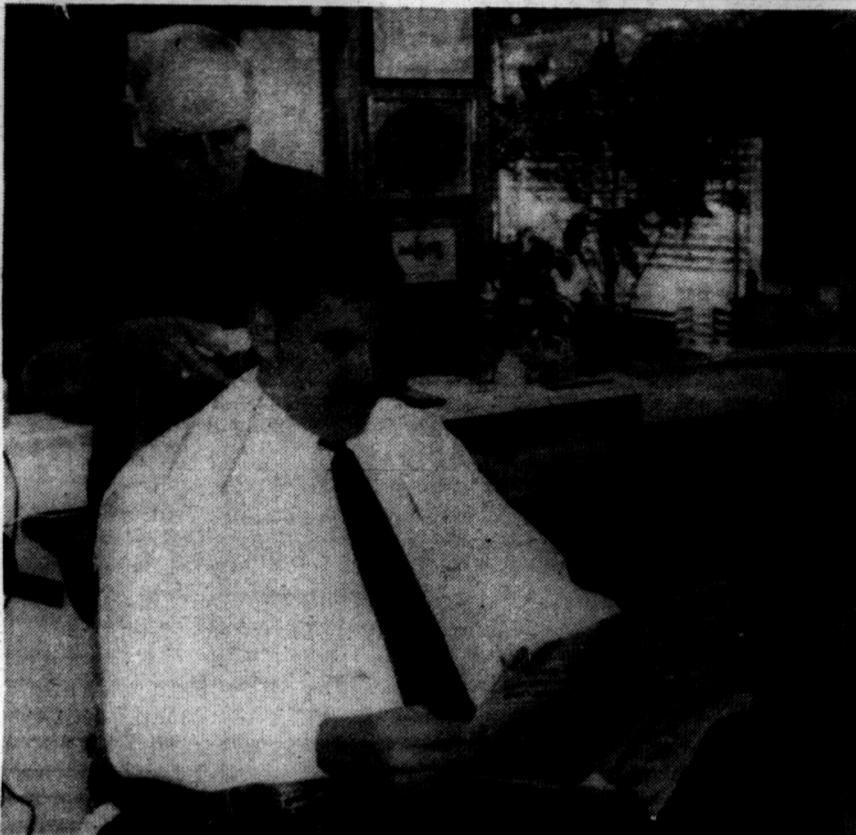
To sacrifice means to give up something. What have you given up to serve faithfully — time, money, energy, resentment, comforts? Paul had given up all these to serve God and his purposes. What have we ever given up? Could someone model our example?

To avoid breaking, your concern must be genuine (vv. 19-24). Paul endorsed Timothy as one who had proven his genuine concern for others. Could we receive that same endorsement today? What is the measuring stick for being as genuine as Timothy was?

The yardstick is found in Colossians 3:1-2. Here we are told that as our concern turns into doing, we should do it "... in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

To avoid breaking, be faithful to the highest possible devotion (vv. 25-30). Paul commanded Epaphroditus for having risked his life to fulfill the task he had been sent to do. He was not busy trying to preach someone else's sermon, or teach another's class, or even wash dirty unassigned feet. We can never meet every need around us. Yet, we can be faithful in our devotion to recognize the need that has our name on it. That's what you call being "spiritual" — the capacity to know, experience, and respond to God. This is the highest possible devotion a Christian can seek in serving faithfully.

Buckley is a member of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal.



Bivocational pastor/barber Lamar Burkes (standing) trims a little off the neck for Vann Martin, long-time customer and member of First Church, Madison. Burkes will soon complete 40 years in bivocational ministry, including 34 continuous years at Bethel Church in northeast Leake County. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

On tithes, gifts, and offerings —

Do we have the right to designate our tithes?

By L.B. Davis

In Genesis 14:16-20, as Abram (Abraham) was returning from victory wherein he recovered his nephew Lot "and his goods, and the women also, and the people," he was met by Melchizedek "King of Salem" who brought forth bread and wine "and he was the priest of the most high God" and Abraham gave him tithes of all.

Hebrew 7:1-4, says that Melchizedek was "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."

Therefore, if the Patriarch Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek, then it is evident that God intended for all his children to tithe.

Leviticus 27:30-32 says that the tenth (or the tithe) on all of our income is holy unto the Lord. This includes cattle, produce of the land, the flock "... even whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord."

Malachi 3:10 says "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Nehemiah 10:38 said tithes were to be brought to the house of the Lord, to the chambers, into the treasure house.

Therefore, there is no doubt that the storehouse is the house of the Lord which is today's church.

In case some should say that the New Testament did away with this, in Luke 11:42 Jesus said "but woe

unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

Matthew 5:18, Jesus said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

It is obvious that Jesus intended for us to tithe as well as love the Lord our God and our neighbor, and that the tithe should be given to the church where we are members.

I write all this because of expressed opinions that one could give the tithe, all or part, to TV evangelists, and other worthy causes even designating part of the tithe to Annie Armstrong, Lottie Moon, Baptist Children's Village, etc.

To me, it is plain that the tithe, (10%) should be given to the church where one is a member. Money given to charitable organizations, including other church activities, should be above the tithe, and should be offerings and gifts. A donation to another church should be above the tithe.

Also, in my opinion, the 10% should be taken from the gross salary before deductions are made for taxes, etc.

I agree that a person has a legal right to do whatever he pleases with his money that he has left after government deductions.

I do not believe that a Christian, one who has accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord, has this right.

Davis is a member of First Church, Leland.

Combination pastor/barber feels right at home with dual careers

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Lamar Burkes has spent most of the last 40 years searching for lost souls and bad haircuts.

The 64-year-old bivocational pastor/barber wouldn't have it any other way, either.

"I've always done (bivocational work). I met my wife through a pastor friend. I was doing it when we got married, and I was doing it when our son was born. They've always gone along with me," the Ridgeland resident said.

Burkes and his wife Nell have been married nearly 38 years and have a 32-year-old son Gregory, who is married with two children and works at the Savannah River nuclear facility near Akin, S.C. Nell has worked for the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol in Jackson for about 22 years.

Burkes is presently pastor of Bethel Church in northeast Leake County, near the Attala County line. He also owns Burkes Barber Shop on Highway 51 in Ridgeland, which most mornings has a steady stream of people sorely in need of his services.

Burkes, who a few years ago was featured in a **Mississippi Magazine** article on bivocational ministers, has pastored as many as four churches at one time.

"I couldn't do that now," he joked.

The month of May will mark Burkes' 34th anniversary at Bethel, a church that holds special meaning for him.

"I was raised in the Bethel Church area. My parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents are buried in the church cemetery. I graduated from Marydale school there and went on to Clarke College," he explained.

Burkes pointed out that the concept of pastors with multiple careers has a long and honorable history in Southern Baptist life.

"Years ago, preachers taught school, farmed, and did things like that. 'Bivocational' is a new word for what we used to call quarter-time or half-time preachers, but I never felt part-time," he said.

Matt Buckles, who works with bivocational ministers as part of his duties in the Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), agrees with Burkes.

"A lot of small, rural churches in Mississippi have a good ministry because of bivocational pastors. There are many Biblical bivocational pastors, and the history of our denomination is full of bivocational pastors. As a matter of fact, the 'fully-supported' pastor is a post-World War II

phenomenon," Buckles said.

Approximately 800 bivocational pastors work in Mississippi, according to statistics cited by Buckles, which means fully 40% of all Southern Baptist churches in the state are staffed by bivocationals.

The Southern Baptist Convention bivocational church average is about 30%, Buckles said, while Alabama has the highest number in the convention at around 50%.

Burkes can talk about the demands and hardships of bivocational pastoring, but he chooses to concentrate on the positive aspects of his work.

"Many Sunday mornings, after a week of working so hard I hurt all over, I wanted to turn over and go back to sleep, but when we'd get to the church I'd be rejuvenated," he said.

"A lot of people mess up in life when they don't do what they're called to do. Do what you're called to do, and it will be a blessing, not a burden," Burkes stressed.

The most important motivation for Burkes to do what he does as many of his contemporaries look forward to retirement?

"When you give love, it comes back to you, too," he said.

Denies AFA pressure...

PBS won't finance homosexual series

TUPELO (EP) — The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) said April 8 that it will not co-finance a new television series with homosexual themes. PBS aired a series titled "Tales of the City," produced in Britain, and exploring joint financing of a six-hour mini-series sequel, "More Tales of the City."

Donald Wildmon, founder of the American Family Association (AFA), had urged his supporters to write to Congress protesting the use of public funds to underwrite pro-homosexual programming.

Armistead Maupin, the San Francisco-based author of the novel on which the series was based, accused PBS of "knuckling

under to conservative pressures" by not financing the new series, which would have dealt with conservative Christian opposition to homosexuality.

But PBS said the decision was made for financial reasons, and denied that the decision was the result of conservative pressure. Spokesman Harry Forbes noted that the network "had no qualms" about airing the first series, which drew high ratings but also stirred controversy with its nudity, profanity, scenes of drug use, and depiction of homosexual relationships. "To imply that we're somehow running scared because of Donald Wildmon is, I think, fairly ludicrous," Forbes said.

"We are appreciative of the fact that PBS has decided not to be pressured into showing more of Maupin's trash by the radical extremists of the homosexual movement," Wildmon said. "With hundreds of cable television channels available, why should American taxpayers be forced to help promote the homosexual lifestyle? Let the homosexuals use their money to promote their goals."

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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VAZ UT ZNK CNURK GXSUAX UL MUJ, ZNGZ EK
SGE HK GHRK ZU YZGTJ GMGOTYZ ZNK CORKY
UL ZNK JKBOR.

KVNKYOGTY YOD: KRKBKT

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Acts Eleven: Eighteen.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SO 00
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 401 NASHVILLE TN 37203
Box 303

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